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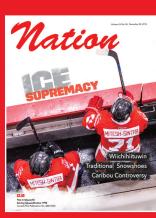








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Overhead shot of the Pessamit
Montagnais bench
Photo by
Jonathan Levert of Image
Nomade Productions



Good Will to all





t's time for the last editorial thoughts of 2016. It's been a crazy year: no charges for the Val-d'Or SQ officers denounced for physical and sexual abuse, questionable environmental monitoring and practices by De Beers, the amazing support for Standing Rock, Donald Trump surprising the hell out of everybody in the world. Attawapiskat's suicide epidemic, the first AGAs by the been good and there's been bad.

Like Santa, the Nation has an idea who's been naughty and who's been nice. We also know who modeled themselves after the Grinch. I have a list but I'm not going to name names. After all, this is the holiday season and one of good Will and cheer. I wouldn't want to find a few pieces of coal in my Christmas stocking because I was naughty or usurped who Santa placed I'm told. on his list.

do each year at this time. No personal

rants or expressions of outrage against the evil scum-sucking money-grubbing narcissistic selfish short-sighted sons of bitc.... Sorry, almost did what I did not like doing at this time of celebration. No such negative judgments should mar this time of caring, sharing and joy. We can do that in the New Year. Besides, being really nice to someone you been having problems with all year larger Cree entities and so on. There's freaks them out. And who knows? It might shift the relationship to a more positive path. As my dad always told me, you get more with honey than with vinegar.

> My idea of a fun time is not destroying someone else's good time. So forgive and forget. Don't be quick to take offense and get physical. Spending time in a cell or the hospital emergency ward during the holidays sucks - or so

When partying, find another way In fact, that is something I like to to get home than driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs. It just

isn't worth it as police become super vigilant at this time of year. Also there are so many accidents related to the holiday spirits leading to injury and death. The only one who should drink and drive during the holidays is Saint Nicholas. I remember leaving something a little stronger than milk out for the jolly man in the hopes of more and better presents. It was my dad's suggestion and I always thought of him as a wise man during Christmas.

Don't forget to share with those less fortunate. It's the right thing to do no matter which religion you follow

But enough of reaching for that preaching. I wish a very Merry Christmas, happy holidays and Happy New Year to one and all. May you get everything you want, especially the happiness of family and friends both new and old. Until next year, I remain friendly and caring.





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"Service Integrity Justice"?

Racial profiling documented in disturbing report

recent report, titled The **Judiciarization of Homelessness** in Val-d'Or, shows that racial profiling in the northern city is a fact of life.

The report found that Val-d'Or police target Indigenous people for minor infractions, with 79.2% of all tickets handed out from 2012-2014 given to those of First Nations descent. Of individuals who received more than 10 tickets in this period, 95% were Indigenous and of those who received more than 15 tickets, 100% were Indigenous. The report was researched and produced by the universities of Montreal and Ottawa, in conjunction with the Observatoire sur les profilag-

Public faith in criminal justice system and law enforcement is part of the foundation of a democracy. Ouebec's justice system requires all Quebecers, regardless of ethnic or racial background to have confidence in the fairness of the process. Police in any community must have the confidence and trust of the public to effectively do their job. The report indicates this is lacking in Val-d'Or.

Cree Justice Director Donald Nicholls noted that the federal government introduced changes to the Criminal Code of Canada in 1996

to reduce the overrepresentation of Aboriginal people in prisons in Canada. At the time it was reported around 10% of the prison population is Aboriginal even though Aboriginal people only represented 2% of the national population.

"Today, this situation has worsened with almost 25% of the prison population being Aboriginal people, while only representing close to 4% of the national population," said Nicholls. "This recent report suggests that unpaid fines are contributing to the number of Aboriginal people being incarcerated in Quebec. If this is the reality we face, we need to work together to find ways to reduce the numbers, not continue to increase them."

One of the problems facing poor people penalized for minor offences is the lack of an alternative to paying the fines incurred. Three Cree people are currently in federal penitentiaries serving two or more years for non-violent crimes because they were unable to pay their fines. The report says that the "overwhelming majority of offences refer to non-violent acts.'

One of the report's recommendations states, "A moratorium should be imposed on incarceration for non-payment of fines in Val-d'Or, fines should be cancelled and alternative measures

should be put in place. The Government of Quebec should modify the Code of Penal Procedure to eliminate the possibility of incarcerating people for default payment of fines in cases where individuals are unable to pay."

Sharon Hunter, the director of social development at the Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre, said the study "confirms what our people have been telling us for years – First Nations members in the streets fall victim to discrimination and profiling that accentuates their distress, suffering and vulnerability."

The report concludes "that there are several indicators of social and racial profiling and systemic discrimination in Val-d'Or against homeless individuals and, in particular, Indigenous individuals who are homeless."

These include:

- An absence or lack of social responses and support for homeless people, in particular Indigenous
- Several challenges in terms of integration and access to services in the City for Indigenous people (including housing);
- High incidence of violence and poverty among this population;
- Absence or lack of social and mental health in Indigenous commu-

Gord Downie being honoured for his work on reconciliation.





nities as well as important systemic barriers for communities to exercise governance and deal with their social problems;

- High number of calls against homeless people including Indigenous people;
- The choice to resort to the police (SQ) as first or sole responder to social problems;
- Massive judiciarization (or criminalization) of homeless people (high number of tickets) and in some cases, the use of the judicial system to obtain fundamental health and social services;
- Tickets are issued in disproportionate numbers against Indigenous people (75%). Moreover, 95% of those who are over criminalized (10 tickets and +) are Indigenous (100% among those

- who received more than 15 tickets). It seems clear that law enforcement has a disparate impact on Indigenous people who are homeless.
- Some indicators of police harassment: 343 people out of 922 received at least once more than one ticket on the same day. 96 individuals received more than two tickets on the same day;
- The use of incarceration for default payment of fines in cases where individuals are unable to pay."

The full report can be found at http://www. profilages.info/ in French only.

In addition the Nation has heard of Starlight rides where individuals allegedly have been driven from Val d'Or past Louvicourt. If this has happened to you and you would like to tell your story please



Crees help draft **UNDRIP** strategy at national meeting

by Dan Isaac Photo provided by the Assembly of First Nations





rVd∆トゼ・ゴ"ՐՐ⊳∆トゼ・マ へ∩Ĺ⊃ゼ゜(∆トゼ へ'Ր) Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) Grand Conseil des Cris (Eeyou Istchee)

☆☆/☆♪ゼ 「↑♪↑Ű Cree Nation Government Gouvernement de la Nation Crie



Congratulations to Kevin Rabbitskin! Recipient of The Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers from the Governor General of Canada

Photo Credit: Nian Matoush. CSB

It is with great pleasure that we extend our warmest congratulations to 14-year-old Kevin Rabbitskin, from Mistissini, for receiving this distinguished award from the Governor General for "Significant Volunteer Contributions".

This award is meant to honour the dedication and commitment of volunteers and it brings us great pride to see one of our youth recognized for his efforts to bring young people together around Cree culture. We hope that through his actions, Kevin will inspire more youth to become more involved in their communities and continue developing their skills. These are important traits that we hope our leaders of tomorrow continue to foster.

On behalf of the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government, we commend you for this amazing recognition of your volunteer work to make a difference in your community and your nation.

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The session was convened to deepen understanding around UNDRIP's potential to support Indigenous efforts in exercising rights, jurisdiction and sovereignty; developing strategies to implement it at the communal, provincial, national and international levels; and provide clarity on how to participate in the complex structures of the

rights instruments ever developed by

the UN. Paul Joffe spoke on behalf of

the Grand Council of the Crees.

loffe has worked as legal counsel to the Crees around their participation in UNDRIP from the beginning. "There are over 370 million Indigenous people in over 70 countries around the world," said loffe. "The only way it could have worked is by building up large consensus between many Indigenous peoples and nations."

And while there's an abundance of fingerprints on UNDRIP, the Grand Council of the Crees played an intricate role in its inception. "The Crees were fundamentally involved in the UN Declaration," said Joffe. "The Crees started their involvement in the early 1980s and have participated throughout the history of the development of the UNDRIP. Every Nation brought their experience of injustice and discrimination to the table. This not only created the need for but also shaped UNDRIP. For the Crees, part of their experience was the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement."

Since Justin Trudeau's election promise to adopt and implement UNDRIP as Canadian law, nothing has been done to make good on the pledge.

"UNDRIP is the most comprehensive, universal, international human rights instrument addressing, specifically, the rights of Indigenous peoples," said loffe. "It includes political rights, social rights, but also spiritual and environmental rights. It's meant to deal with and eliminate the discrimination that has taken place throughout history and that continues to happen today."

On a community level, the Cree Nation has been doing its part to see

that UNDRIP is practiced. "All the rights and principles mentioned in the UNDRIP, we bring them home and apply them. We use them in our relationship with Quebec and Canada and how we manage the Cree Nation Government," said Bill Namagoose, Executive Director of the Grand Council of the Crees. "You have to incorporate those concepts and enforce them while seeking Cree autonomy in the new relationship we're developing at the provincial and federal levels."

Overall, the commitment to UNDRIP and the education surrounding it, has to be a continuous process if it is to succeed in creating a fair and equitable world for all Indigenous people. "There was a time when human rights were seen as individual rights and not collective rights. But Indigenous people are now recognized to hold collective rights. The Cree Nation, it's not just an individual that has these rights," said Joffe.

"Human rights are dynamic. The meaning is always growing and it can never be done in one meeting, no matter how long we spend on it. It has to be an ongoing process of education because UNDRIP is so expansive. The more people learn about it, the more they can use it effectively."

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Bears win big in Gatineau

The Cree Nation Bears took home first place in Midget BB competition at the Jean Labonté hockey tournament in Gatineau in late November. The Bears were 4-0 in their division, downing the Pirates of Dollard des Ormeaux 6-3 and the Loups des Collines 4-2 in their first two games before defeating the Répentigny Olympiques 3-1 and the Saint-Eustache Patriotes 5-2 in their final two matches.

Coach Fred Perowne acknowledged the support of fans from all over the Cree Nation who travelled from Eeyou Istchee to cheer on the team and gave special mention to forward Brandon Wadden who scored 10 goals in four games. Wadden was invited to play with the Amos AAA team following the tournament and netted a goal and two assists in his first appearance with the Forestiers.





Val-d"or marches for **police**

against Native women in Val-d'Or,

there were demonstrations of sol-

idarity in town and an outpour-

ing of support from Indigenous

communities and organizations as

well as mayor Pierre Corbeil and

members of the local community.

and economically profitable Cree

Regional Events and Entertainment

hockey and broomball tournament

had wrapped up – SQ officers and

civilians decided it was their turn

Abitibi-Témiscamingue region,

including off-duty officers, family

ed in a march December II to

show support for members of the

who is related to a member of the

"I wanted them to know they have

our support and to do something

to help them put it behind them,"

to play the victims but it was not

easy for us, for the relatives, the

"We are not here for pity or

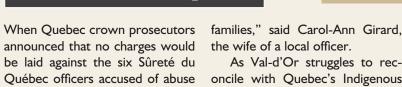
Close to 100 people from the

to take to the streets.

city's SO detachment.

Chevrier told the CBC.

Weeks later – once the popular



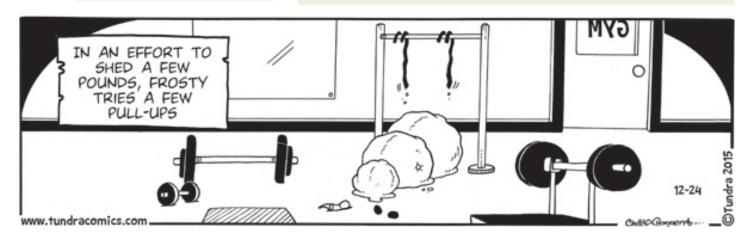
As Val-d'Or struggles to rec-Québec officers accused of abuse oncile with Quebec's Indigenous population it's clear that some officials and non-Native residents still don't grasp the reality of the way First Nations can be and have been treated in the city.

> "I think we are witnessing here a demonstration of solidarity, support and thanks or recognition, if I may put it that way, to people who are called upon to intervene in situations that are too often delicate, and also very difficult," said Mayor Pierre Corbeil following the

While many have sad they support the Native women who came forward to share their experiences members and civilians, participatof abuse at the hands of local officers, including Corbeil, it seems that others see the lack of charges laid by crown prosecutors as proof of the officers' innocence. Preissac resident Bob Chevrier,

During their press conference Val-d'Or SQ, organized the march. in Val-d'Or November 18, however, the four prosecutors emphasized that the decision didn't mean that events described in the 37 allegations by 31 different women did not take place. Instead, it was due to their low hopes of obtaining convictions during trial.









ter for the Cree Nation was revived earlier this month as the C.R.E.E. Senior Hockey and Broomball Tournament returned to Val-d'Or following a one-year absence.

Last year marked the first time in three decades that the tournament failed to take place, as the event was cancelled as a result of the Cree Nation Government boycott of the city in the wake of published reports of abuse of Indigenous woman by members of the local

The one-year hiatus didn't dampen the enthusiasm surrounding this important First Nations event.

Over 1000 players, accompanied by family members, descended on Val-d'Or December I-4 for the 36th edition of the tournament, while live web streaming of the action was enjoyed by an estimated 40,000 viewers.

Over 70 teams battled for coveted championship banners in seven divisions, including Women's Recreational Broomball,

Broomball. Women's Hockey, Old Timers Hockey 40+, Class B2 Hockey, Class BI Hockey, and the main event, Class A Hockey.

The Waswanipi Chiefs recovered from a tournament-opening 3-2 loss to the Waskaganish Wings to emerge as this year's Class A Hockey champions.

Powered by leading scoring Vern Cooper, the Chiefs subsequently allowed only two goals in three straight wins to capture first place in preliminary action.

in the playoff round, handing Pessamit Montagnais a 4-1 loss before clinching this year's championship with a 4-0 shutout victory over the games, along with three Wemindji Wolves.

Vern Cooper displayed the skills that convinced the Plymouth Whalers to select him in the first round of the 2006 OHL Priority Draft, tallying a pair of goals and four assists to take home Top Scorer honours.

Alex Cooper made this year's victory a family affair by earning the MVP award, while a pair of shutin Chiefs backstop Francois Koczynuski getting the nod as Best Goalie.

With three points in four penalty minutes, Wemindji's Dave Lazarus was named Best Forward in Class A Hockey, joining teammate Tyler Shanush, who picked up the award for Best Defense.

While the men from Wemindii fell short in their quest for this year's Class A Hockey championship banner, the Wemindji Lady Wolves got the job done in

After splitting their first two games, posting a 5-2 win over the Oujé Lady Hawks and a 4-1 loss to the Mistissini Mustangs, the Lady Wolves put on a show in their preliminary date with Team Nunavik, dominating in an II-I win.

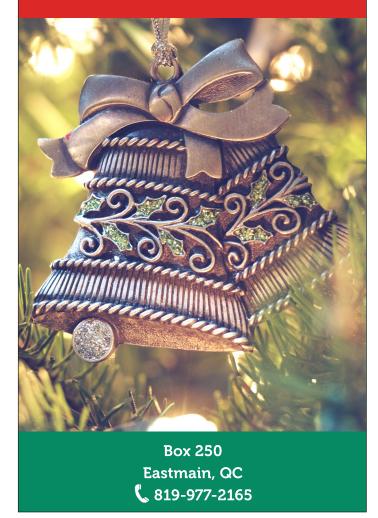
Nunavik grabbed an early I-0 lead in that contest, but the rest of the game belonged to Wemindji's Moreen Laloche.

The 20-year-old put on a clinic, scoring eight straight goals in the Lady Wolves'



Merry Christmas **Happy New Year!**

In this season, may the blessings of Creator continue to flow in all that we do as we celebrate another year.



MEN'S CLASS A CHAMPIONS
WASWANIPI CHIEFS

victory, and earned both MVP and Top Scorer honours while leading Wemindji to the Women's Hockey crown.

Wemindji's Dana Morrison, who previously starred for the SUNY Canton Kangaroos of the NCAA, added to her trophy case with Best Defense honours, while a pair of Mistissini Mustang teammates, Wabby Longchap and Wabaguin Coonishish, were named Best Forward and Best Goalie, respectively.

The Wemindji ladies also proved to be tops in Women's Competitive Broomball. The IceStars outscored opponents by an 18-0 margin over seven games en route to a gold medal victory.

A pair of IceStars players earned individual awards, including Elizabeth Shash, whose perfect performance between the pipes garnered her Top Goalie and MVP honours, while teammate Brittany Visitor was named Top

Daisy Ottereyes of the Waswanipi Eagles potted four goals and three assists to claim the award as Top Scorer, while teammate Savannah Jolly was selected as the winner







their tournament opener, scoring seven third-period goals en route to a 9-4 win over the Washaw Sibi Kings.

The Ex-Wings followed up with another offensive explosion, handing the Lac Simon Old Bucks a 9-2 beating, but received a taste of their own medicine in a 9-7 loss to the Wemindji 69ers.

But the boys from Waskaganish would eventually have their revenge, eking out a 5-4 win over the 69ers in the category final to claim the Old Timers Hockey 40+ championship banner.

Ross Miniquaken of the 69ers led the way with 10 points, edging out six Ex-Wings shooters in the race for Top Scorer, while Waskaganish netminder Dave Peace emerged as Top Goalie, and fellow Ex-Wing Donald Namagoose was named MVP.

Another championship banner can be raised at the Rupert River Sports Complex after the Waskaganish Raiders claimed victory in Class B2 Hockey.

The Raiders knocked off the Waswanipi Grand Chiefs 8-5 in the category

final, powered by MVP Ryan Weistche and Top Goalie Kurtis Cheezo.

Kurt Hester ran away with the Top Scorer award after finding the back of the five assists while leading the Waskaganish Dawgs to a semi-final appearance at this year's tourney.

added to their championship banner collection with a 9-2 rout of Pikogan Maian in the Class B1 Hockey final.

Stanley Kistabish reprenet 10 times, and adding sented Pikogan as the recipient of Class B1 Best Defense award, and the Nemaska Axemen's Sammy Matches picked up the Top Scorer

The Mistissini Chummys award with a five-point performance.

> But otherwise, it was all Chummys, with Max Lapointe winning the award for tournament MVP and Best Forward, while former NCAA women's hockey netminder Shayna Dominique outplayed the men between the pipes, picking up the prize as Best Goalie.



Cree Health Board **putting** patients first

any complaints have been lodged in recent years about the Cree patient lodging and travel program. But after a number of changes at Cree Patient Services, the program is making notable progress in ensuring that Crees seeking health care in southern cities such as Montreal are housed and transported safely and comfortably.

The first thing to change was the travel. In October 2015, the Cree Health Board and Air Creebec partnered up to provide two patient charter services in partnership with Air Creebec. The coastal charter flies six days a week Sunday to Friday; the inland charter flies five days a week, Monday to Friday. They are faster and more comfortable, and have an on-board nurse.

Then, last spring, CPS negotiated with Montreal's Espresso Hotel to ensure appropriate housing for patients. Finally, the name of the CPS program is changing: it will now be known as Wiichihiituwin.



to the Heavens





A tour and feast was held at the hotel on Guy Street downtown Montreal December 6 to celebrate the changes as well as the official opening of the Cree lodging centre. Over 200 people attended the event, including Cree patients.

The hotel has taken great steps to accommodate Cree patients. They included a spiritual room (cheyamaougamikw), an activity room (sabtuan) and a community kitchen (piminûwhaûgamikw). The rooms were clean, comfortable and made it a "home away from home" one person remarked.

Perhaps surprisingly, Cree Board of Health and Social Services Chairperson Bella M. Petawabano said people should continue complaining. As Moses told the guests, "This is an example of the Cree Health Board listening to the people who use this service. It is the persistent voice of the people that made this event today. As I told you many times, the Cree Health Board looks at complaints in a different way - in a positive way. By complaining that's how we improve the services

birch bark, porcupine quills, moose and caribou hair, bones, beads, sweet grass and cedar on paper, canvas and denim with both acrylic and oils. She incorpo-

called themselves Indians of All Tribes (IOAT). The action called for respect of the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie between the Lakota and the United Sates that stated all

retired, abandoned or out-of-use federal land was to be returned to the Native people from whom it was taken. They felt since the Alcatraz penitentiary had been closed in 1963, the island should qualify for return to Native control under the treaty. Though forcibly ended by the US government, the 19-month-long occupation had a direct effect on federal Indian policy and established a precedent for Indian activism. At its peak, there were over 400 people on the island.



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See you at our conference in Mistissini June 6-7, 2017













There is a lot more coming, this I can promise you. This is only the start.

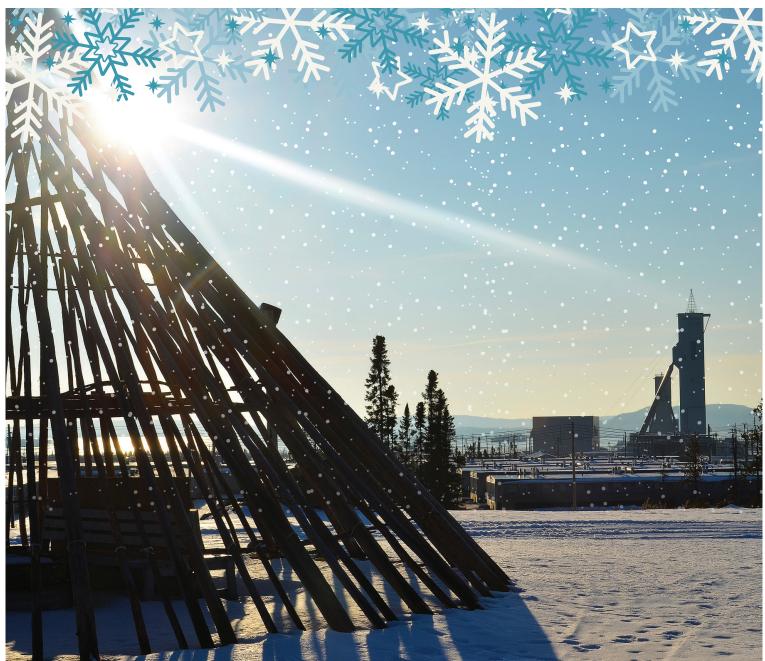
What you are seeing is the vision the board of the CHB has for Cree Patient Services. It is a compassionate service. I hope that you see this.

and we thank you and continue to keep doing that. Because it is only you who can tell us how well we are doing to improve services. We are here to provide services and care."

Cree Health Board interim Director of Patient Services Helen Bélanger Shecapio-Blacksmith explained that the program's new name, Wiichihiituwin, was chosen from a contest in which participants submitted 12 possible terms. "In English it means helping others or helping you," Shecapio-Blacksmith said. "Tonight we are really happy because over 200 people who came out to celebrate with us and the patients. At any given time, there can be up to 160 Cree people staying here at the Espresso Hotel."

CHB's interim Executive Director Daniel St-Amour said the mandate in his position was to solve the problems at Cree Patient Services. "That was where we had the most complaints. I was told fix it. The first things we did were to get lodging with the Espresso and the charter. We set out to improve the traveling and the lodging. These things make your life a lot easier when you seek care because there is nothing worse than going to the doctor when you are really tired. You need a good rest and we want you to get well."

But the changes have only just begun, St-Amour promised. "There is a lot more coming, this I can promise you," he said. "What you are seeing is the vision the board of the CHB has for Cree Patient Services. It is a compassionate service. The staff of the CPS



has been working really hard "We established a traditional to allow people to contribto make this happen."

traditional meals," he said. freezers in our communities of health care in Eeyou Istchee

food program for people in Director of Justice and detention a number of years Correctional Services Donald ago, as Elders told us heal-Nicholls said the community ing comes from the land. We are donations people would kitchen model at the hotel is a figured if we could not bring proven success. "This is a great people to the land, we would initiative of the Cree Health bring that healing to the peo- health reasons." Board to have a kitchen in ple we work with through the Montreal for patients to cook traditional foods. So, we set up Coon Come said the evolution

ute food to the program. We would be happy to also work with the health board if there like to make for Cree people who may be in the south for

Grand Chief Matthew



GOLDCORP SHINES A LIGHT ON THE OUTSTANDING WORK OF ITS BUSINESS PARTNERS AND PRECIOUS EMPLOYEES

To all of our creative, ingenious and dedicated resources, congratulations and thank you. We take great pride in working with local talent and entrepreneurs.

Thanks, and Happy Holidays! =GOLDCORP ቫር ተነትሥበር ላ ላ ላሳን ነገር ነ

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is part of a long-term services and I recognize vision to have Crees Abel Kitchen, who was manage their own social involved in those negoservices. "Our leaders tiations. That's certainly in the past wanted to being masters of your have control of their own own destiny, of managhealth services," said ing your own facilities. Coon Come. "We've That was not easy but talked about control of the hardest thing is to Cree education. Then we implement those visions talked about control of and those dreams." Cree health and social





Standing Rock water protectors

celebrate, prepare for long winter

by Joshua Grant Photos by Will Nicholls

fire at the Oceti Sakowin resistance but not the war. camp was extinguished from over. While people around the world when the Obama admineasement for Energy Transfer Partners to drill Lake Oahe, hundreds of water protectors continued to dig in and

Partner's board member has already appointed to his cabi-

he original sacred non-Native activists feel that they've won the battle

Dallas Goldtooth, of the earlier this month. But Indigenous Environmental for many, the fight is far Network, took to social media the day of the announcement to outline rejoiced on December 4 what exactly the decision means for the Dakota, istration suspended the Lakota and Nakota people and their supporters.

"Today, the Obama under Standing Rock's Administration announced that it will not grant the final easement for the Dakota Access pipeline to cross the prepare themselves for Missouri River. They did a harsh winter at the not DENY the easement, North Dakota protest they SUSPENDED a decision on the easement until With a Trump pres- an Environmental Impact idency on the horizon, Statement is conducted on an Energy Transfer ALTERNATIVE river crossings," he explained.

"Now it's a waiting game to see the final nails in net. And as the com- the coffin: will DAPL invespany insists it will pro- tors continue to flee? Will ceed with construc- oil suppliers drop their contion of the Dakota tracts? Will President-elect Access Pipeline Trump take any action on (DAPL), Native and the pipeline should the





Department of Justice and Correctional Services ·Δ5'dσi·Δ° P5 ለዓ-ሳ-ዕ-ግባዓ ው ባግ ላ የተለበ*ት* ላ ው"ቦ ይቆየቦ"ር የ ተ



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info@creejustice.ca www.creejustice.ca





first two options not happen? Good questions – but that doesn't stop the victory songs tonight," Goldtooth exclaimed. "We celebrate... and remain vigilant for the tions was unacceptable. fight to come."

The presence of hundreds of US armed forces veterans bolstered resistance to the pipeline and softened the stance of the US Army Corps of Engineers. Shortly after travelling to the camp to show their support, the veterans took to the frontlines of construc-

tion, created a human wall between police and water protectors and told authorities that the excessive use of force during prior alterca-

The suspension of the DAPL's final easement came just a day before a previous ultimatum issued by the Engineer Corps, which said that the protest camp needed to be evacuated by December 5, one day after the arrival of the veterans.

Joseph Harry Benedict, who befriended the Nation during a visit to Standing Rock, is still on site and says he has it was closed." noticed a change in focus.

"The energy of the camp is shifting quickly in some ways," he said. "As the people adjust to the weather some have left and there have been tensions as adjustments are made for winterization.

There has been some confusion with the closing of the sacred fire that began this journey, yet the clarification came from the Elders. They had looked to the spirits and it was said their prayers have

been answered, which is why

The fire of resistance still burns bright, however. "We keep working at things every day," said Benedict. "There are people working on constructing better shelter for the people. This camp is shifting immensely in my eyes... and the energy is finding its way. A lot of things going in motion."

This month's news in Standing Rock wasn't all good. A day after the announcement of the suspended easement came reports of a pipeline leak

just 150 miles northwest of the Oceti Sakowin camp.

Electronic monitoring equipment failed to detect a rupture in the Belle Fourche pipeline owned by Wyomingbased True Cos and over 176,000 gallons of crude oil leaked into the Ash Coulee Creek. While 37,000 gallons of oil was recovered, it reinforces the dangers posed to the Sioux water supply should the Dakota Access Pipeline be allowed to pass through the Cannonball River.



Cree Nation of Mistissini

JOB POSTING: FIRE CHIEF

Location: Cree Nation of Mistissini Salary Scale: \$56,416.00 to \$84,624.00

Under the general direction of the council of the Cree Nation of Mistissini, but more specifically under the supervision of the Director of Community Development, the Fire Chief will be responsible for the management, leadership and supervision of the Fire and Emergency Services.

Work involves extensive physical activity, mental stress, and extremely hazardous working conditions; required to work inside and outside in the inclement weather conditions; requires extensive interaction with the public; subject to deadlines and unscheduled hours; ability to take direction; prioritize work schedule; ability to work independently.

OUALIFICATIONS

- Secondary school diploma or equivalent;
- Fire & Safety studies diploma from a recognized Institute;
- Certification for "Pompier I" from the ENPQ or a person recognized and accredited by the ENPQ;
- Certification for "Officier non urbain" from ENPQ or a person recognized and accredited by the ENPQ;
- Certification for NFPA 1021 "Standard for Fire Officer Oualifications" Level IV Fire Officer:
- Certification for NFPA 1031 "Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Inspector and Plan Examiner";
- Certification for NFPA 1033 "Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Investigator" Fire Cause & Determination Level III:
- Certification for NFPA 1041 Level I "Standard for Fire Service Instructor Professional Qualifications";
- College education will be considered an asset;
- Must have excellent writing and communication skills;
- Oral presentation skills are required;
- Knowledge and ability to work with various computer software programs is a requirement;
- Must have work experience in coordination and administration;
- Must be reliable and be able to work with minimum supervision;
- Bilingual in Cree and English, French will be an asset;
- Must have a valid driver's license.

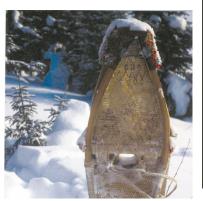
All applicants must provide certificates, diplomas and two reference letters

Please address all applications to: **Andrew Neeposh**, *Director of Human Ressources* Council of the Cree Nation of Mistissini 187 Main Street Mistissini, QC G0W 1C0

Closing Date: January 27, 2017



















A "how-to" on traditional snowshoe making in Eeyou Istchee

by Dan Isaac

George Longchap's blood. He learned by watching his father, who learned from watching his father, and today Longchap is teaching his daughter the tradition.

days I always watched

my dad making snowshoes and I saw his process," he said. "I remember going out into the bush with him to find the trees. Birch or tamarack is what he used. These days we use white ash or cedar."

Protocol dictated "In my childhood that he only observe the process as a child,

but crafting snowshoes is something he always knew he'd do. "When I watched my dad make the snowshoes I wanted to make my own, but he told me I couldn't make traditional snowshoes until I was older," said Longchap. "Even as a teenager, I wanted to do it, but it wasn't until I got married that I found the

time to make my snow- as Winnipeg. "Once peoshoes.

Longchap thought he'd be taking requests or making as many pairs as he has over the past few years. Initially he set out to make himself a pair, but when people saw the quality of his work, the requests came flooding in snowshoes and I make

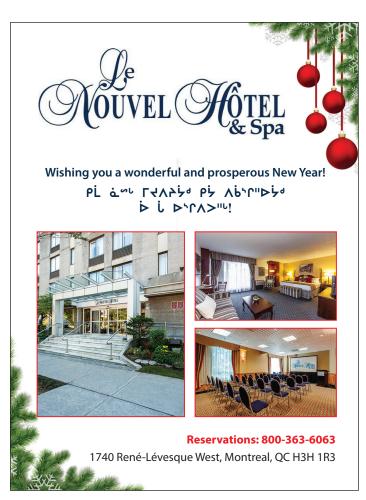
ple found out, they startnever ed asking for pairs,' said Longchap. "Over the last two years, I've made 26 pair for myself yet."

A pair of Longchap's snowshoes can take up to 10 days to finish. "We all have our own style of - some from as far away mine from the begin-

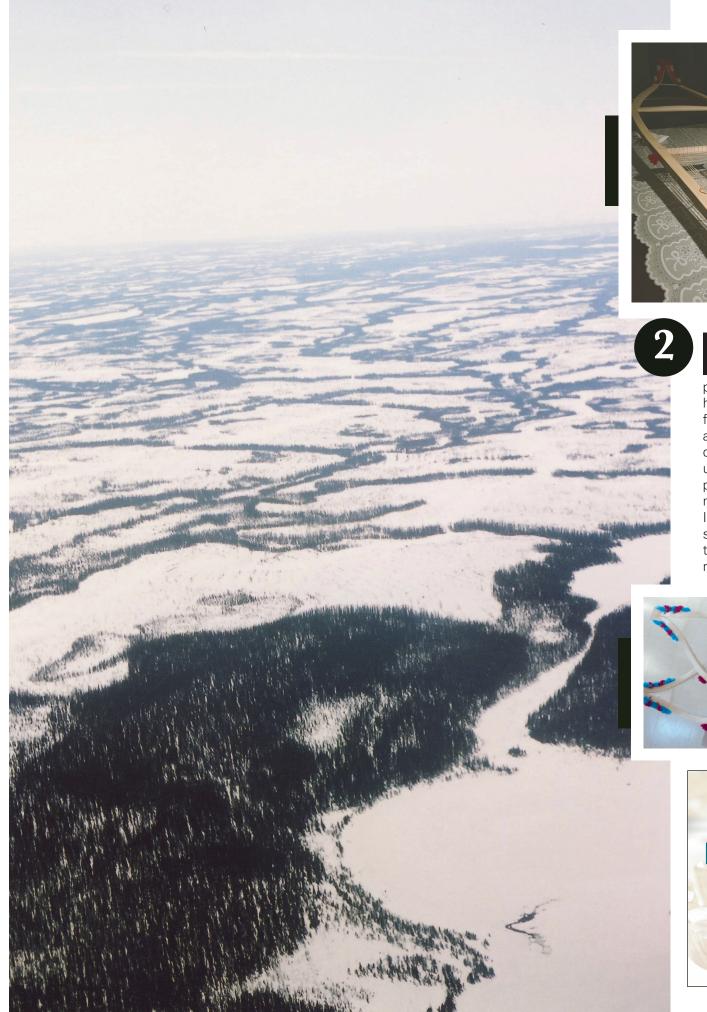
ning to the end," said Longchap. "I even do the weaving.

Longchamp is committed to carrying on the pair. I don't even have a tradition and hopes his daughter does the same. "If we can't continue with what our ancestors did, then we're lost," he said. "I love what I'm doing. I want to continue what my dad taught me."

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Choosing the right wood

he best wood to make traditional

snowshoes is birch or tamarack, but any hard wood can be used as well. The grain needs to be straight throughout ■irst soak the planks in hot the board's length, withwater or steam them with out any large knots, and a steamer. Then bend the only the sapwood rings planks in both directions; that's of the tree are used. A how the snowshoe becomes perfectly straight log can flexible. Then tie the plank be hard to find, especially around something that has your in ash, but they're crucial desired shape - some people if you want to bend the use traps for this. Once tied, the wood without cracking or planks must be dried. In sumbreaking it. The wood is mer, they can be hung outside. cut by splitting the log In winter, hang them by a wood and planing it down to stove. The ties will loosen when the right size (two inchthey're dry and ready for the next step.

Bending





Crosspieces



nce they're dry, sand them smooth, then measure and cut the crosspieces. There are two crosspieces that divide the shoe into top, middle and bottom. After they're in, sand and smooth them and make sure they're not



part. Weave the middle worn.

nen it's time for last and sew in the foot painting. This is piece. Once that's done, the fun part but soak the whole thing or you don't have to paint just the middle and then them. After the painting, leave them outside in the it's time to weave them, cold. The soaked portion starting at the bottom or will turn a nice white. tail. Then weave the top Now they're ready to be



Finishing



Happy Holidays してシャーハレッし ふんぱからけいらい

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Lives at Stake by Joshua Grant

by Joshua Grant

■ niversity of Toronto researcher Tracey Galloway didn't mince words when asked for her opinion concerning Canada's Nutrition North

"It's not effective," she said.

Established by the former Conservative government in 2011 to replace the Foodmail program, Nutrition North Canada (NNC) is a government subsidy for retailers, mandated to improve access to "perishable nutritious food" in isolated communities. According to Galloway's in-depth study of the new program, it is difficult to judge whether the program has met this goal, and may in fact have done the opposite.

The subsidy level per product varies across eligible communities and is based on geographic location and population. Under Nutrition North, however, the subsidy

Under the Foodmail program, anyone who shipped food up north could do so at the Canada Post rate, Galloway noted. "Now it's a retail subsidy. The money goes to the grocery stores and

"When I travel to these communities I see people **suffering** severe financial hardship, struggling to afford basic necessities"



they negotiate their own freight rates which are not disclosed to the public."

Galloway, an Anthropology professor at the U of T, was recently in Igaluit to present her research findings, around the same time as Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada completed its national tour of

NNC subsidized communities. Based both on the numbers and her firsthand experience, she believes the program needs a serious overhaul.

"The data shows very high prices in remote communities for subsidized items, at least twice as high as comparable benchmarks in southern regions of Canada," she told the

Meanwhile, items such as diapers and baby-care products, personal and feminine hygiene products, household cleaning products, harvesting equipment

and craft supplies - which all used to be covered by Foodmail – are no longer eligible for subsidy.

"When I travel to these communities I see people suffering severe financial hardship, struggling to afford basic necessities, things that are only available to them at one or two stores in their communities. Some communities only have one store. The average number of stores in northern communities is two, and that includes big cities like Igaluit," said Galloway.

It's not just the NNC program that has issues. The







government's measures to determine whether or not NNC is successful also fall short of the mark.

"They look at two criteria to determine success" she said. "The weight of food shipped up north and the cost of food in the commu-

nities. The weight of food shipped north did increase in the first year but we're measuring the increase against the backdrop of no prior to that.

"Retailers are paid for every kilo they ship to sub-

sidized communities," she continued. "They aren't paid to sell the food at an affordable rate. It's kind of a hollow measure. It tells us that subsidy for the two years they ship food but not that it's consistently available, of a certain quality or available at an affordable price."

Galloway emphasized the gravity of the program's shortcomings.

"It's a matter of life and death," she said. "People are suffering ill health because they can't afford regular access to healthy food. Our subsidy is meant to guarantee that. Right now it's failing to provide the essentials of life to these communities."

There is also an impact on mental health, she added. "All this financial hardship creates feelings of frustration and failure in these people who can't provide for their families given their financial means."

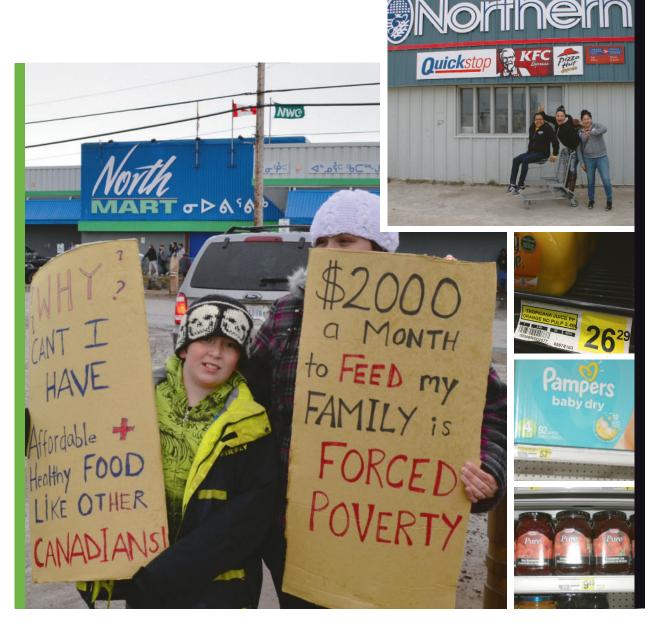
Asked what needs to be done to improve the NNC program, Galloway had a number of specific suggestions for the federal gov-



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ernment, including price caps, more stringent regulations and additions to the list of eligible products.

"I would like to see price ceilings on perishable food items, and I would like to see them tied to southern benchmarks," she said. "I'd like to see a strict regulatory framework within the subsidy to ensure that

available and of sufficient quality."

that third-party quality inspections were a regular part of the Foodmail program whereas Nutrition North leaves quality control up to the retailers.

accountability around reliable access and quality of perishable food is reliably food," she concluded. "And

I'd like to see an expansion of the eligibility list so Galloway also noted that items previously subsidized under Foodmail could be subsidized under Nutrition North."

Galloway's full research and recommendations to address high costs and "We need some limited access to nutritious food in northern Canada will be published in the coming weeks.

"I would like to see price ceilings on perishable food items, and I would like to see them tied to southern benchmarks"







I looked at my buddy at the time and said, 'That's not how we hunt.'

hisasibi's Lorne Sam found the caribou before he met the Naskapi hunters.

"Near kilometre 112 on the Trans-Taiga Highway, there's a road that goes to one of the excess-dykes for the LG-3 dam," Sam told the Nation. "I saw a caribou lying in the middle of the road. It was left there. My brother and I went to check on it. The caribou was still warm. It had been shot recently.

"When I went to go get my knife, the guy came around with his pickup. He came out. I introduced myself and asked, 'Is this your caribou?' He said, 'Yes.'

came out from the bush. It was one adult, and three of his sons, I think. They already killed four caribou at that one spot. He said, 'All the caribou ran off, so I chased them with my pick-

They were Naskapi from near Schefferville. Sam said he was honoured to meet them.

"I said, 'Hello, welcome to our territory," he recalled. Then he went on his way. It was only on returning the next day that he found carside of the road.

"That scene I didn't like. but I didn't know who did it," he explained. "I went to the same spot where I'd met them, there was a camp nearby. I drove up the access road to the camp and I saw their campsite and that's where I saw 16 caribou, all lined up and gutted. And they were still driving around in their pickups. Three pickups already had a couple more caribou in the trucks. I looked at my buddy at the time and said, 'That's not how we hunt.""

were soon all over social caribou killed ranged from media, and discussion grew 60 up to 200. both in Cree and Jamesian One local recognized the outsiders and identified one communities. Radisson's Luc of them. When reached by Gervais, in particular, posted a description of the hunt's the Nation, the hunter spoke aftermath, which he mocked on condition of anonymity. as "traditional slaughter," and alleged that the hunters

that the hunters were kill-

in order to sell their meat.

"I was there for the hunt, over at Radisson. We were selling their meat in killed 70 caribou. We were the south and would soon be 15 of us," he explained. back for more. He claimed "We weren't invited. We're he had counted 115 cariallowed because we're bou. Among Cree Facebook Naskapis. It's Innus who groups, rumours swelled aren't allowed. It's in the Cree-Naskapi Act. We took ing in such huge numbers papers from our band with us. It's different than the way

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they hunt there - we just said another Naskapi hunt- the store and never comeach for our families. I've got more than 100 people in my family. The Crees do it that way too sometimes. And they're not just their caribou. I've seen photos of the way some of the others do it. They throw out things they don't use. We take everything back. We gutted them, that's it. I've seen people leave the heads and the legs."

He said that his group of 15 absolutely did not sell the meat, because he considers selling country meat deeply disrespectful

go once a year, we get five er had shot 60 caribou in Eeyou Istchee on a recent trip of his own, and on returning to his community, had sold them for between \$300 and \$400 a head, even trying to sell them to the Hunter Support Program (which refused them).

> warded the text of a social media post allegedly made by the second hunter, in which he argued that hunting is hard, difficult work, requiring expensive rifles, ammunition, snowmobiles and equipment.

"We buy beef, chicken, to the land. However, he pork and other meats at from Chisasibi, was sympa-

plain about the farmers who charge for the meat," the post read. "But when a Native or Inuk charges for his or her catches, they fail to see how much effort it took to catch the animals. Yes, there was sharing in the past but money had The Nation was for- little meaning back then, but now absolutely nothing is free. Please do not complain about Native and Inuit selling country food and stop being a freeloader and make the hunter pay for everything while you enjoy his or her efforts."

Ricky Angatookaluk,

"We thought they were just going to kill a couple and leave, but when I saw 16 caribou lying in the camp, plus the ones in their pickups, they had more than 20."







Que cette période des fêtes vous apporte joie et amitié

May this holiday season bring you lasting friendship and joy

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thetic to Naskapi and Innu hunters, because the George River herd that those Nations once harvested has collapsed so drastically that the hunt has been completely closed, even to Native hunters.

However, he drew the line at the idea of selling country meat. "A lot of them are traditional keepers," he said of the Naskapi and Innu. "But some of them do sell caribou meat or a whole caribou. There's not much to say, but we all have the same feelings in Chisasibi."

Sam said he was amazed the Naskapi were allowed to hunt in the Chisasibi region. "We thought they were just going to kill a couple and leave, but when I saw I6 caribou lying in the camp, plus the ones in their pickups, they had more than 20. I was there Friday and Saturday – they were killing more than 20 a day. I saw on Facebook that they were still hunting there two days later."

Sam believed that this kind of hunting played a role in the rapid decline by more than 90% of the George River caribou herd "on their side" of Quebec.

"When the Grand Council heard that the George River herd was almost extinct, they opened up to the Innu hunters and invited them to hunt here in our territories," Sam explained. "But they didn't know what was coming. They overkill them. I don't know what they're thinking, coming onto our side of the territory and hunting the same way they did on their land. You can't kill that many caribou at once – that's not how it works. When I went hunting last time, we killed one for my family and one for my buddy's family. The meat is still in my freezer. I'm going to go again to stock up my meat later on."

This is not the first time this year that outsiders have come in after the caribou, Sam noted. Recently, a number of hunters he believed to be Innu were after the caribou near LG-1.

"A lot of people thought they were dangerous, because they don't know where the camps are, where people are living in the camps along the highway. Some people said they saw bullet holes in their tents."

Sam didn't blame all Innu or Naskapi for what he sees as the misdeeds of their cousins. However, he said, "The way I saw them is the way I'm going to judge them."





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C.N.G.

Happy Holidays!

With families planning their travels across Eeyou Istchee and beyond to come together and celebrate the holidays with loved ones, we wish you safe journeys, but above all, we wish for peace, love, and happiness to lead your hearts.

As the New Year approaches with hopes anew, our thoughts turn gratefully to those who have made our progress and achievements possible for the Cree Nation. In the true spirit of the season, we extend to you our sincerest appreciation for your contributions as we continue to grow, together, as a Nation.

On behalf of the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government, we wish you and your families much joy and happiness throughout this Holiday Season and in the New Year ahead!

Dr. Matthew Coon Come

Grand Chief/Chairman

Rodney Mark

Deputy Grand Chief/Vice-Chairman

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Christmas specials



y fox fur cap was slipping off my head and I awkwardly adjusted it back into position. I was in a television studio in Timmins and the year was 1968 and my whole class was part of a Christmas special show broadcasting live to northern Ontario. I portrayed one of the wise men who brought gifts to baby Jesus in Bethlehem as we sang The Little

Hundreds of miles north, our parents watched us proudly. Since it was pre-VCR days, only memories are left

of this event, triggered every time I hear that particular Christmas carol. It is something that I have never forgotten, something I have always cherished — after all, who else can claim to have been on TV in those days? I don't recall being in any other Christmas pageant since then.

Drummer Boy.

Over the decades, Christmas pageants have become a mandatory spectacle for parents everywhere. For me, one of the proudest moments

of my adult life was to hear my children sing quietly or loudly, while the teacher managed to control the chaos of shy children and noisy spectators. Even though the show for each one was mere minutes, it seemed that these moments are always remembered as one of the classic times of your life.

Recently, we were able to hear the children sing loud and clear, as this time it was my grandchild who performed

with her class. We listened to the entire concert via a live broadcast on the local radio station, and I know for a fact that we actually heard much better than the people who attended the pageant because of the clarity of the recording – plus there was no background noise to drown out the children's tiny vocal chords.

To spice things up, a play about Christmas on the brink of disaster being saved by Batman and Superman made the show quite interesting. If only it was streamed live like many of the

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bottles just in case.

meetings we are often subject to from our hallowed political bodies, it might make Christmas a digital memory to be shared forever.

My young granddaughter was a little worried about how Santa would be able to get around in Whapmagoostui since there wasn't that much snow for anything that had skis or runners attached to it, so I told her that Santa was able to deliver presents anywhere

in the world, even places that didn't have snow. A quizzical look followed, then she brightened up, saying that the sled was probably made with little wheels just in case he had to land in the sand. That made sense to me.

Another question popped up on whether or not Santa would get too hot landing on a beach. I countered that by saying these days he had air-conditioning in his sled and even the reindeer had water bottles just in case. Another little girl asked whether Santa could eat ice cream all year round at the North Pole and I replied that most likely he ate cookies and drank milk for most of the year.

What do the elves eat? Do they eat candy canes too? Does an elf ever grow old? Can the reindeer fly around the world without eating? Does Mrs. Claus eat as well? I looked at the young questioner who obviously liked to eat anything and everything as it seemed food was her favourite topic. Yes, I replied, Santa and his family do get to eat pizza once in a while when they order takeout. No one wanted to believe that so we all agreed that Santa lives on cookies.

Speaking of cookies, I tell the wideeyed and hungry looking kids that I'll make some special cookies for Santa. My granddaughter tells me to make sure that I only give him one cookie so that we can have some too. I happily agree, saying that Santa is already overweight and should share his cookies with us.

Happy with the Q-&-A session, everyone quickly runs off to bed. My grandchild returns and asks me if Christmas was tomorrow, and sadly I tell her that she has to wait a few more weeks before Santa shows up. Good she says, he won't eat my cookies for a while. Everyone was happy with that.



Under the Northern Sky A Christmas wish

by Xavier Kataquapit

hristmas is right around the corner and I am reminded of that fact every time I go shopping. The shops in all the local northern Ontario communities I call home, like Kirkland Lake, Iroquois Falls, Timmins, Cochrane, North Bay and Sudbury, are promoting Christmas with posters, advertising in the media and music through sound systems in bigger stores.

Don't get me wrong - there are lots of things I like about Christmas. But the commercial part of it has really taken over to such a degree that it is difficult for me to still find the heart in this celebration.

I don't recall a huge celebration at Christmas when I was a boy in Attawapiskat. We went through the motions because we were more or less convinced it was the normal thing to do with a tree to decorate and giving gifts, but I never did get very excited by it all. Mostly, Christmas often ended up as a time of year when there was a lot of drinking and tragedy.

Still, for children I believe that Christmas with all of the myths and legends is generally a good thing. Children's minds are full of images of Santa, reindeer pulling Santa's sleigh, wonderful gifts and lots of treats to eat. But when it takes a turn for a lot of drinking and drugs in the home, the memories of childhood become very dark and sad.

Christmas and Santa Claus are new concepts for the Cree of lames Bay. We have only known the Christian religions and the celebrations that come with them for a couple hundred years. Before that we lived a life that was all about the land, Mother Nature, the spirits of the land, water and air, and of course the creatures. European religions and celebrations and holidays like Christmas were not known by my people. In contrast, Christians had been

following their religions for nearly 2000 years and Christmas and Santa had histories that connected back many hundreds of years.

The funny thing is that the Santa who we know today has origins that would surprise most of us. The original Santa Claus can be traced back to Saint Nicholas who was a Christian bishop in the third century in Turkey. He would have been darker skinned and probably skinny. It is interesting to note that the name Santa Claus is actually a contraction that was made over the years of Saint Nicholas. His day was originally celebrated on December 6 to mark the day he died in the mid third century and in honour of him for the kindness and good deeds he did for children. In his lifetime he survived being impris-

oned and persecuted by the Romans. Later he was associated with Christmas Eve.

People who were Christians around the world started celebrating his day and his legend in reference to Kris Kringle, La Befana, Yule Tomte, and Christkindli. Santa

made his debut in North America in 1809 when Washington Irving wrote "A History of New York," featuring Saint Nicholas, a jolly, fat fellow smoking a Dutch pipe, who flew over the rooftops in a wagon and dropped presents down the chimneys. A minister by the name of Clement Clarke Moore in 1822 wrote a Christmas poem for his daughters titled, "An Account of a Visit from St. Nicholas," later more popularly known as 'Twas the Night Before Christmas. A lot of the images that we now associate with Santa came from this poem which became very popular. A cartoonist named Thomas Nast used

Moore's poem later to draw images of Santa which appeared in Harper's Weekly and that image was more like the Santa we know today as chubby, with a big white beard and carrying a bag full of toys. Nast was German and called his character Santa Claus which caught on with Americans.

Santa has been used to advertise gift buying and giving from the 1800s. The colourful Santa that we know today was partly created by Coca-Cola in a 1930s advertising campaign done by artist Haddon Sundblom which presented St. Nick in the company's classic red.

So even the Santa Claus that everybody knows started out being very different in colour, race and origin. We have only really known Santa in

> the image that is very familiar and popular for less than 100 years. Most remote First Nation children have known him for much less time.

My wish is that all those children out there get to experience the joy and love of functional and car-

ing families this Christmas and holiday season. I worry that far too many of them will have to deal with terrorizing situations because those family members who are supposed to be caring for them are drunk or on drugs. So, if you think that just maybe you might have a problem with addictions and that Christmas is going to be hell for your kids this could be the perfect time to pick up the phone and call your local Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous chapter in your town or city to get help. This could be the year you give the very best Christmas pres-

ent ever to your children.

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